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INSIDE A CAMP WINDOW

BY MAYME E. WILLIAMSON, R.N., ARMY NURSE CORPS

California Base Hospital, No. 30

Of course we were bound for France or to that great "Somewhere, Over There," and anyone who thought we were not was quite mistaken. But there is many a slip twixt the cup and the lip, as you see, for one night I was arriving late for French class and wondering how to explain my missing the previous boat, when all of a sudden I spied a messenger boy holding a telegram for our Chief and I took it and marched boldly into the class-room thirty minutes late and when she read it, well, anyway, she never did ask me why I was late. You know we are always punctual in the army. The finale of the telegram was that in two days we marched out of Uncle Sam's great guest house and boarded a boat for Jersey City and that was the end of our sea-faring, we did not even get seasick.

Of course there were trains going south and we took one, every one of us, sixty-five strong. We were not exactly going to a funeral, but something on that order. After a while our dear Chief came to us and shook hands and said *au revoir* and God bless you. Her face looked sad for we were her "steen" children and we were going in five different directions. Fifteen of us got off at Baltimore and the rest stood on the steps of the train and the back end of cars and everywhere visible and sang, "Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag and smile! smile! smile!" We started out for Camp Meade and had a wreck on the way, but we smiled, smiled, smiled.

We arrived late at night and all of the nurses stayed up and gave us a right royal welcome. We had already made up our minds before reaching Camp that we were going to have hot biscuits, colored waitresses and southern hospitality and sure enough that dream actually came true. We were met by a motherly sort of lady with a drawly, sweet southern accent and she said, "Girls, would you all like to stay in bed tomorrow morning and rest, as your trunks are not here?" We all shouted "Yes" in chorus, for we were tired. You know getting equipped, studying French and chasing sub-trains (not submarines) is strenuous work. She took us, amid shouts of "Hail California nurses," and "Welcome to our city," etc., to our room,—not rooms. There were thirty-five hospital beds in the ward, our dormitory, two dressers and a chair now and then. We looked like patients when we were all tucked in and it didn't matter in the least if someone wanted the window shut and you wanted it open, or someone wanted it open and you wanted it shut, or if they knocked your hat on the floor when

they were trying to find a place to say their prayers, or if they put your shoes on tomorrow morning instead of their own, or if you wanted a bath right away quick and you got it in two or three hours. Oh, no, these were trivial things. We were joyful and happy for we were going to be up and doing. It would not be "Over There," but it would be with our American boys just the same and we were glad to be of service anywhere. And this was our first night in No. 9. When we sailed away into the oblivion of sleep, our dreams were pleasant and our prayers were happy for the soldier boys, amid the breath of pines in the snow-covered camp.

The next morning, about ten o'clock, two of the nurses who were off duty trudged into No. 9 loaded with goodies from the canteen, oranges, sandwiches, crackers, milk and cookies, a feast fit for the gods. This was our breakfast in bed and the end of a perfect day-dream. Very soon our trunks arrived and we began to unpack them. We put our necessary articles of present and future need under our pillows, under our mattresses, and hung the rest up on the floor. It was great fun. Ward 9 took on the immediate appearance of a second-hand clothing store. We fairly flew into our uniforms, so eager were we to investigate the big pine, summer-resort-looking, buildings. There were miles of halls to go through before one reached the ward numbers. You may be sure the boys were glad to see us for every new nurse meant a new bath and better care. Some of them had not had baths in a long time for there had not been enough nurses. After we would get them all fixed up, nice and comfortable, they would start singing or whistling, "I don't want to get well for I have a wonderful nurse." They sang it morning, noon and night, until I began to wish somebody would write another one for them to change off on once in a while. We had some very sick patients in contagious wards but fine courage was displayed.

If the soldiers of the Rainbow, Empire and other divisions of the Sammies show as much bravery in combating the foe as the sick Liberty Boys showed in getting well, there will be great victory soon. They were impatient to get well so that they could lick the Kaiser. They never complained, no matter what they had to eat, and sometimes they did not have very good things, but they were thoroughbreds and we nurses just loved to nurse them for we felt we were doing a big bit to win victory. The boys amuse each other with their efforts at rhymes,

A sweetheart Marie
Wrote a soldierie
And asked if he
Was a public-ee
Or a privatee.





Irish Mickie, a mumpie, in Ward E wants pay rollee for wife, not a dam centee in monthsie, and so this is the way Irish Mickie is pestered in Ward E.

We let them have their fun and tried to cheer them up and sometimes they needed to be cheered up.

One day I ran onto a strange case. I knew he was not considered to be very ill but he seemed to have lost his grip and for no reason whatsoever he was actually standing on the brink of going west. So I said to him, "Mr. ———, do you not want to get well and go over to France with your comrades?" and no sign of response from him. So I said, "You know in a few days when you get a little stronger you will have a furlough and go to see your folks." He looked slightly interested, so I ventured farther and said, "But you won't if you do not try harder, you are not very ill, you should be sitting up now, please make up your mind to get well quickly." The next day he was fine and all he needed was arousing. He continued to gain and in a few days he was so full of pep that everybody in the ward was laughing continuously at his jokes. He was possessed with superfluous energy after he was aroused, until it became very hard to subdue him. He did not like baths. One day I was to give him one and he begged off, saying he was too cold. The next morning he knew he would surely get one, so he asked the night nurse to give him a clean pair of pajamas and she gave him a gaudy pair with a coat of violet shade and pants of pale green and he was surely dressed up. When I arrived with his bath water he told me Martha Washington had given him a bath and I thought he had grown delirious. So I said, "Well, pray, who is Martha?" and he said, "Oh, Martha, she is the night nurse, she gave me a bath and dressed me up for George's birthday at six a. m.," and with that he tossed back the cover and displayed those wonderful gay colors. So that night I said to the night nurse, "Why did you give M—— a bath so early in the morning?" and she replied, "I did not." So we arranged that she should tell him there was a bath ordered at twelve o'clock that night, etc., and he got a real bath that next morning, a sure enough one. So the psychology of it was this, that he did not die because he got cheered up first. And we have to do a lot of that, especially "Over There," they say, and we are going to do it, for it is worth while, for the boys are everything. God bless the boys, the khaki-clad boys, the Y. M. C. A. and everything that is good for them.

Arise, nurses, and join us. Your country calls you. That is the cry and are we going to be less ready to answer than the men, our brothers, are to answer the bugle call? Of course not, we are going to do our share. General Gorgas wants 30,000 nurses and this our glorious opportunity has come and never before in the history of the

world have we women, nurses, played such a wonderful part in time of war. Florence Nightingale created the profession of nursing out of the chaos of the Crimean War and we are going to create a greater profession, a higher standing for nurses out of the chaotic conditions of this world war. Every woman who is not a nurse envies us. The society ladies and women of position and affluence would love to take our places and nurse their loved ones, only they do not know how. We know how and it is great to fill the most important position, an aid to humanity, in a hospital ward of the upside down world of today. I would not be anywhere else. Everything we do in the Army is interesting, especially now that we must help, we women, nurses, to do our share in creating a new world, that in which brother-love rules.

PATRIOT OR SLACKER?

BY MARY H. HUMPHREY, U. S. N.

If patriotism means anything to American men and women, it must mean, at this time, surrender of self-interest, and an earnest desire to serve one's country in whatever capacity an individual is best prepared. To the nursing profession, this patriotism should have the same appeal that it has to every able-bodied man. All graduate nurses should feel it a duty to their country to offer themselves to one of the three branches of the national service, the Army, the Navy or the Red Cross. To do this may involve financial loss and more or less self-sacrifice, but it is the one service nurses can best render their country and the need for those services is so great that all who indifferently neglect to offer themselves must be classed with the "slackers."

To serve at the front is a great privilege and a wonderful experience, but no greater or more wonderful, from an humanitarian standpoint, than to serve in the hospitals of the Naval Stations or in the Army Cantonments. The patients in these hospitals are largely young men, who in the hardening process incident to the change in living conditions in the camps, as compared with the comforts and luxuries of their home life, succumb to the attacks of the various germs which are found to prevail where so large a number of men are massed together.

They need more careful nursing at this period in their military career than later, when nature has been fortified by severe muscular exercises, plain nourishing food, and the body hardened by exposure.

The urgent need, as expressed recently by the Surgeon General of the Army, for 5000 nurses to volunteer for service, should inspire every nurse with such patriotic fervor, that more than the number called for will respond.